--This application is a continuation of United States Application Serial No. 10/000,658, filed October 31, 2001; which is a continuation of United States Application Serial No. 09/374,172, filed on August 13, 1999; which is a continuation of United States Application Serial No. 09/054,156, filed April 2, 1998; itself a divisional of United States Application Serial No. 08/719,569, filed on September 25, 1996, which issued on July 13, 1999 as U.S. Patent No. 5,922,307; and which claims priority from Provisional Application Serial No. 60/004,258, filed September 25, 1995; all of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference.--

In the Claims:

Please delete claims 1-12 without prejudice to the filing of any appropriate continuation application.

Please add the following claims.

--13. A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

18. A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

applying to the teeth a composition having a pH of between about 7 and about 10 and comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

22. The method of claim 18 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

23. A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

raising tooth surface pH to between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the tooth surface with a peroxide-containing or peroxide releasing tooth bleaching composition.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the step of raising tooth surface pH includes applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent having a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

25. The method of claim 23 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

27. The method of claim 23 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10.

28. The method of claim 23 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

29. A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

applying to the teeth a composition capable of buffering tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the composition capable of buffering tooth surface pH includes a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

31. The method of claim 29 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

32. A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

buffering tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

33. The method of claim 32 wherein the step of buffering include applying to the tooth surface a composition comprising a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

34. The method of claim 32 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

35. A method for whitening the teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

maintaining tooth surface pH at between about 7 and about 10, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound or hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to whiten teeth.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein the step of maintaining includes applying a composition including a member selected from the group consisting of potassium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

37. The method of claim 35 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

38. A method for whitening teeth of a subject comprising the steps of

applying to the teeth a composition comprising an alkalizing agent, and

contacting the teeth with a mixture comprising a hydrogen peroxide precursor compound in an amount effective to whiten teeth,

wherein the pH at the tooth surface is between about 7 and about 10.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.

40. The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is a rinse, paste or gel.

41. The method of claim 38 wherein the composition is buffered in a manner to maintain tooth surface pH between about 7 and about 10.

42. The method of claim 38 wherein tooth surface pH is maintained during tooth whitening at a pH of between about 7 and about 10.

43. A method for effecting heightened whitening of teeth which comprises the sequential steps of first applying to the teeth an aqueous rinse composition having an alkaline pH of about 8.0 to about 10.5 which application is thereafter immediately followed by brushing the teeth to which the rinse has been previously applied with a peroxide dentifrice to effect whitening of the teeth without water rinsing the teeth between the rinse regimen and the dentifrice regimen.

44. The method of claim 43 wherein the teeth are brushed with the dentifrice immediately following application of the rinse.

45. The method of claim 43 wherein the peroxide is urea peroxide.

46. The method of claim 43 wherein the peroxide compound is present in the dentifrice composition at a concentration at about 1.0 to about 10% by weight of the composition.

47. The method of claim 43 wherein an abrasive is present in the dentifrice composition at a concentration of about 1 to about 30% by weight of the composition.

48. The method of claim 5 wherein the abrasive compound is calcined alumina.--